

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2506

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Environment, Energy & Water, February 22, 2002

Title: An act relating to the joint task force on green building.

Brief Description: Creating a joint task force on green building.

Sponsors: House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology (originally sponsored by Representatives Romero, Linville, Fisher, Jarrett, Cody, Dickerson, Veloria, Barlean, Simpson, Rockefeller, Dunshee, Hunt, Cairnes, Schmidt, Edwards, Upthegrove, Miloscia, Anderson and Wood).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Energy & Water: 2/21/02, 2/22/02 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & WATER

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Regala, Vice Chair; Eide, Hale, Honeyford, Jacobsen, Keiser and Morton.

Staff: Andrea McNamara (786-7483)

Background: "Green building" is a term currently used for programs that promote environmental conservation and sustainable development. The concept of green building incorporates development standards and building construction processes that promote resource conservation (including energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation features), consider environmental impacts and waste minimization, create a healthy and comfortable environment, reduce operation and maintenance costs, and address issues such as historical preservation, access to public transportation, and other community infrastructure systems.

Green building initiatives have been developed by various federal and state agencies, and green building programs have been established by local governments throughout the United States.

Some Washington local governments and builders, including Kitsap County, Clark County, and the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties, have implemented green building programs.

Summary of Bill: A task force on green building is created. The task force includes the following ten members: one member from each caucus of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker; one member from each caucus of the Senate appointed by the Senate Majority Leader; a representative of the Office of Community Development; and one representative each for cities, counties, the residential building industry, the commercial

building industry, and environmental organizations, selected by associations representing those interests. The task force chair is authorized to appoint experts and advisors as nonvoting members.

The task force must complete a thorough study of cities and counties that offer green building programs and low-impact development codes to:

- determine program components that are effective and ineffective;
- determine incentives and disincentives to creating a program;
- study existing green building standards; and
- identify potential for low-impact development to reduce storm water management, road building, and other infrastructure costs.

The task force study must begin within 30 days of adjournment of the 2002 Regular Session and submit its final report, including findings and legislative recommendations, to the Legislature by January 1, 2003. The task force provisions expire March 30, 2003.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Interest is high, and growing, in establishing more local green building programs and possibly state standards for such programs. Oregon, Montana, California, and Canada are already actively promoting green building programs. Green building standards are not incompatible with superior building products and sometimes even lead to superior quality construction in addition to the other environmental benefits. State standards will help promote acceptance of and increase demand for green products such as coal fly ash that will benefit Washington-based businesses that produce and distribute such products. Low-impact development practices can significantly reduce government infrastructure costs and can provide tremendous environmental benefits.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Rep. Sandra Romero, prime sponsor; Clint Kurtz, ISG Resources, Inc.; Terry Hull, Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team.